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A conversation with Daniel Stepner, concertmaster

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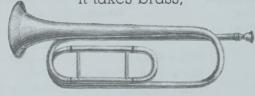
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A chorus and period-instrument orchestra, the Handel and Haydn Society is an internationally recognized leader in the field of historical performance, a revelatory style that uses the instruments and techniques of the time in which music was composed. Founded in 1815, the Society is America's oldest continuously performing arts organization, with a longstanding commitment to excellence and innovation. Now under the dynamic leadership of Artistic Advisor Sir Roger Norrington, Principal Conductor Grant Llewellyn, and Conductor Laureate Christopher Hogwood, Handel and Haydn is widely known through its local subscription concerts, touring, concert broadcasts on National Public Radio, and recordings. The Society's *Lamentations and Praises* won a 2002 Grammy Award, and its two most recent CDs, *All is Bright* and *PEACE*, appeared simultaneously in the top ten on Billboard Magazine's classical music chart. Since 1985, the Society's award-winning Educational Outreach Program has fostered the knowledge and performance of classical music among young people in under-served schools and communities. In the 2007-08 school year, the Outreach Program will bring music education and vocal training to more than 10,000 students in the Greater Boston area.

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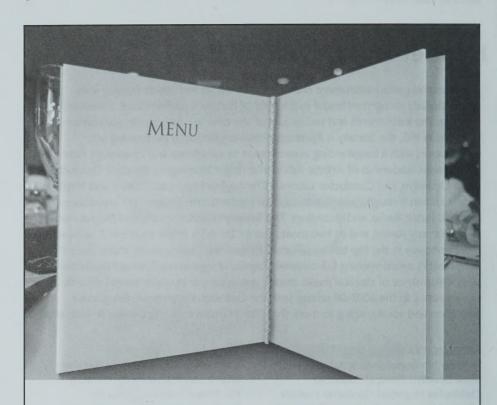
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Program

2007-2008 Season

Friday, March 21, 8.00pm Sunday, March 23, 7.00pm NEC's Jordan Hall, Boston

Daniel Stepner, directing

Concerto Grosso in C Minor, Op. 6 No. 3

Largo • Allegro • Grave • Vivace • Allegro

Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713)

Concerto for Oboe and Bassoon in G Major

Andante molto • Largo • Allegro molto

Stephen Hammer, oboe Andrew Schwartz, bassoon Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

Il Pianto d'Ariana

Concerto Grosso in E-Flat Major, Op. 7 No. 6

Pietro Locatelli (1695-1764)

Andante-Allegro • Adagio • Andante - Allegro • Largo • Largo andante • Grave • Allegro • Largo

-INTERMISSION-

Da quel giorno fatale (Il Delirio Amoroso)

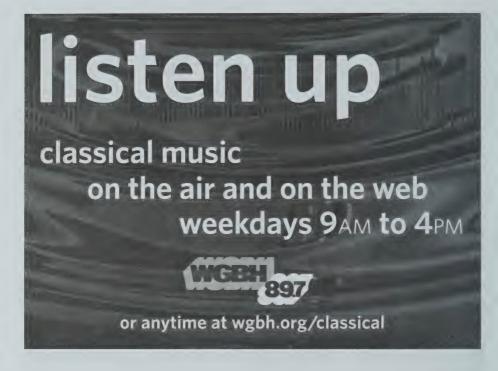
George Friderick Handel (1685-1759)

Dominique Labelle, soprano

The program runs for approximately two hours, including intermission.

The audience is respectfully asked to turn off all electronic watches, paging devices, and cellular phones during the performance.

Handel and Haydn Society is funded in part by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.



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C3

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Program Notes

Italian Virtuosi

NOTES IN BRIEF

Italy dominated the world of European music in the 17th and early 18th centuries. The brilliance and flash and expressiveness of the new Italian music—partly derived from the expressive developments of opera, partly from new and virtuosic ways of employing the instruments of the violin family—recommended itself to musicians throughout Europe. They traveled to Italy from all over to study composition and performance styles.

For the last thirty years of his life, Arcangelo Corelli was hailed as the master of this new, modern, expressive style. All of the other composers on this program learned from him, either directly or through his publications.

Antonio Vivaldi added a new spurt of energy and brilliance that excited many composers (among them J.S. Bach). Pietro Locatelli was a superb violin virtuoso who developed new playing techniques for his instrument that established the basis for the virtuosity of the next generation.

Handel is one of those northern Europeans who went to Italy to learn and who became brilliantly Italianized, fusing the traditions of his native Germany and his adopted England with the most influential of all, those of Corelli and his compatriots. Arcangelo Corelli left only a modest body of work, and all of it instrumental, but he was extraordinarily influential. He grew up among a flourishing school of concerto and sonata composers allied to the church of San Petronio in Bologna. Already at the age of 17 he was admitted to the famous Accademia filarmonica there. Five years later he went to Rome, where he soon became one of the foremost violinists, teachers, and musical leaders. In 1708 he retired, devoting his final years to polishing his twelve concerti grossi for publication. This set, his Opus 6, became the classic standard against which all others were measured.



CORELLI

Among the elements that struck Corelli's contemporaries as new and significant in his work was its directness and simplicity; indeed, his style was appropriated by so many composers that it eventually became a cliché. He sought a singing quality in his music, and his harmonies generated a modern sense of tonality. His concertos oppose the large group

("concerto grosso") with a group of soloists ("concertino") consisting of two violins, cello, and continuo. Sometimes they play together, but when the parts diverge, the soloists present the more elaborate musical material, faster and livelier, often contrapuntally playing off each other. The C Minor concerto alternates slow and fast tempi, each with its own character, and each exploiting the varieties of sonority between solo strings and massed strings, the whole concluding with a lively jig.

The many hundreds of concertos that **Antonio Vivaldi** composed, a large percentage of them for the talented girls in a Venetian orphanage known as the Pietà, range from virtuoso showpieces to smaller and lighter works for instruments for which few composers wrote concertos, such as the lute or piccolo. He also took many opportunities to experiment with instrumental color, formal patterns, and unusual combinations of instruments

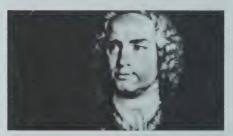


VIVALDI

After successful foreign touring, Vivaldi returned to Venice in 1721 and remained there almost to the end of his life. We have documentation to show that, in the four years following August 1725, he composed no fewer than 72 concertos for the Pietà!

This is Vivaldi's only concerto for the combination of oboe and bassoon. When he wrote a double concerto for two instruments of the same type, he normally involved them in dialogue throughout. In this case, though, the bassoon remains essentially a bass instrument (though a very lively one) while the oboe takes on the major melodic role. Thus they complement one another effectively in counterpoint but don't exchange the same musical ideas in competition. The fresh sonority and the energy of the fast movements are both especially attractive features in this concerto. The slow movement liberates the bassoon from its supporting function in the bass and allows it to sing with the oboe (in a tenor register) over the bass line in the strings, making the players a more traditional duet than in the remainder of the concerto.

As a performer, **Pietro Locatelli** was in the advance guard of a new generation of violin virtuosi. His later compositions, though, including Opus 7, are on the conservative side, retaining the older forms of the world of Corelli.



LOCATELLI

The sixth (and last) concerto of Opus 7 is one of the very few to which Locatelli gave a title, "Il Pianto d'Arianna." It is unusual, in the rapid succession of different tempos in the first part: Andante-Allegro-Adagio-Andante-Allegro-Largo. This suggests the rapid changes of a dramatic scene, with a quick alternation of sections of recitative with arias. And since the title that Locatelli gave the piece refers to a very famous operatic scene—"Il Pianto d'Arianna" ("The lament of Ariadne")—which is the only surviving portion of Claudio Monteverdi's second opera (of 1608), one might assume that there is some connection. It is not a specific musical connection; although following Monteverdi's example, the story of Ariadne was revisited by many other composers in the 17th and early 18th centuries.

Whatever the origin and intent of the title might be, Locatelli's final concerto grosso in the set represents a return to the genre of the Corellian concerto grosso, with a concertino consisting of two violins and cello. Yet of the instruments in the concertino, it is the first violin that plays a distinctly leading role, with far more elaborate music than the others through most of the piece. In this respect, the work is a bow to the solo concertos that Locatelli was especially known for. We can respond to the swift changes of mood and character by remembering the princess of Crete who had helped Theseus slay the Minotaur and escape from the Labyrinth, only to be deserted by him on Naxos after they had run off together. The moods of the Locatelli work can easily remind us of possible emotional connotations from the story of that unhappy lady.

It was in Rome that **George Friderick Handel** truly became Handel. This

German-born composer spent four crucial years in Italy, gaining a fluency in the language and absorbing the vocal style of the opera and the instrumental style of the concerto grosso. It was in Rome that Handel became a great composer for the human voice, with results that he extended from the Italian cantata and opera to the later oratorios that he composed in England.



HANDEL

Public performance of opera was banned in Rome. In its place, Roman music lovers reveled in cantatas, vocal and dramatic musical scenes in concert form that were stylistically indistinguishable from operas. Plots were normally rather slight, though highly emotional, often drawn from classical mythology or the popular 16th-century epic poems of Ariosto and Tasso. Increasingly subjects were drawn from a pastoral tradition, inspired by Virgil in the first instance and carried on by Guarini's Il Pastor fido in the 1590s. Dozens of cantata texts dealt with the romantic problems of nymphs and shepherds in an idealized pastoral location, and the characters of Thyrsis and Chloris became the conventional names for the shepherd and his nymph.

Il Delirio amoroso ("Love's delirium") had its first performance early in 1707 in

the palazzo of Cardinal Pamphili who wrote the text for the piece. It is one of relatively few cantata texts that takes the female point of view. The opening and closing recitatives provide the narrative setting: Thyrsis has died, and Chloris laments the loss of his love. In a series of elaborate arias, Handel characterizes the thoughts of Chloris: seeking her Thyrsis in heaven, and plotting to liberate him from the Underworld, if that's where he should be. When she encounters him in the Underworld, he seems to spurn her. She suggests that they pass through Lethe, the river of forgetfulness, which will allow them to put aside the torments of the past and move onto the joys of the Elysian fields. Those who know Handel's first English-language masterpiece Acis and Galatea will recognize the recorder's solo material as the basis for "Hush, ye pretty warbling choir"

As the simple narrative nears its end, two purely instrumental passages—one depicting the sweet sounds of Elysium, the other a closing dance—suggest that the performance in Pamphili's palazzo might have been offered with a simple staging—a private "operatic" touch for the Roman elite, who would enjoy Chloris's happy (and easy) recovery of her lover in a place of endless sweetness.

–Steven Ledbetter Musicologist Steven Ledbetter writes for many orchestras, chamber ensembles, and other musical institutions throughout the United States. He has written the booklet notes for nearly 200 recordings.

TIMELINE

1636: Harvard University is founded

1653: Corelli is born in Italy

1669: The great painter Rembrandt dies in Amsterdam

1667: Milton writes Paradise Lost

1669: Stradivari makes his first violin

1675: Corelli settles in Rome

1678: Vivaldi is born in Venice

1685: Handel is born in Germany

1695: Locatelli is born in Italy

1700: The first known piano is documented in the Medici palace in Florence.

1703: Vivaldi becomes a violin teacher at the Pietà orphanage

1706: Handel travels to Italy at the invitation of the Medici family

1707: Handel premieres his cantata *Il Delirio amoroso*

1708: Corelli conducts the premiere of Handel's *La Resurrezione*.

1713: Handel moves to London • Vivaldi gains responsibility for all music at the Pietà

1713: Corelli dies in Rome

1741: Vivaldi dies in Vienna after moving there in hopes of gaining a court appointment

1759: Handel dies in London

1764: Locatelli dies in Amsterdam

Artist Profiles

Daniel Stepner, director/violin



Daniel Stepner has been Concertmaster of the Handel and Haydn Society for over 20 years. Mr. Stepner is also Artistic Director of the Aston Magna Festival in the Berkshires, first violinist of the Lydian String Quartet (in residence at Brandeis University), a member of the Boston Museum Trio (resident at the

MFA), and a Preceptor in Music at Harvard University. He has also been concertmaster for a number of orchestras, including Boston Baroque, the Boston Early Music Festival Orchestra, and the New Haven Symphony. As a touring musician, he has played in 11 countries in Western Europe and the former Soviet Union, and throughout Australia and the United States. He has taught violin and chamber music at the New England Conservatory, the Eastman School, Boston University. and the Longy School. He last directed a concert with the Handel and Havdn Society in January 2004.

Dominique Labelle, soprano



Born in Montreal, Dominique Labelle first came to international prominence as Donna Anna in Peter Sellar's production of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. Since then she has worked with conductors from Boulez to Zinman, and orchestras from Atlanta to San

Francisco. She is a regular guest soloist in Europe. Ms. Labelle has recorded extensively, featuring repertoire from the 17th century to contemporary works. Her recording of Handel's Arminio won the 2002 Handel Prize. Ms. Labelle is a National Winner of the Metropolitan Opera competition, and the recipient of a George London Foundation Award and Boston University's Distinguished Alumni Award. A regular guest with the Handel and Haydn Society, she last appeared with the ensemble in performances of Bach's St. Matthew Passion in 2006.

Stephen Hammer, oboe



One of America's leading players of historical woodwinds, Stephen Hammer has been principal oboist of the Handel and Haydn Society since 1986. He was principal oboist of the New York Collegium, of which he was a co-founder and artistic director, and is a founding member of the Bach Ensemble and a regular participant at the Aston Magna festival. His solo, chamber, and orchestral recordings appear on Decca L'Oiseau-Lyre and other labels. He has served on the faculties of the Longy School of Music, Indiana University, New England Conservatory, and other leading schools of music, and also collaborates with instrument makers in building replicas of historical oboes.

Andrew Schwartz, bassoon



Bassoonist Andrew Schwartz has appeared throughout the world as a soloist, chamber musician, and orchestral player. His career ranges from frequent appearances with the Metropolitan Opera, to recording jazz with Wynton Marsalis, to appearing on Broadway as a member of the original cast of Peter Brook's *La Tragédie de Carmen*. Equally accomplished on historical instruments, Mr. Schwartz has appeared as soloist with many of the finest period-instrument ensembles, including the Handel and Haydn Society, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, Tafelmusic, Rebel, Apollo's Fire, and the Orchestra of St. Lukes.



Handel and Haydn Society Orchestra

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Clayton Hoener
Guiomar Turgeon

Jane Starkman Krista Buckland Reisner

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Christina Day Martinson

Susanna Ogata

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Jennifer Stirling^s
Chair funded in memory
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BASS

Anne Trout

Amelia Peabody Chair

OBOE/RECORDER

Stephen Hammer Chair funded in part by Dr. Michael Fisher Sandler

BASSOON

Andrew Schwartz

HARPSICHORD

Michael Beattie

THEORBO

Richard Stone

* Concertmaster

§ Principal

Program Texts

HANDEL: Delirio amoroso

Recitative

Da quel giorno fatale che tolse morte il crudo Tirsi a Clori ella per duolo immense, sciolto il crin, torvo il guardo, incerto il piede, par ch'abbia in sè due voluntà, due cori: e dal chiaro intelletto, per gran fiamma d'amor turbato il raggio, ora s'adorna, ora del crin negletto fa dispettoso oltraggio, e varia nel pensier, ma sempre bella agitata così, seco favella.

From that fatal day
when Death took
cruel Thyrsis from Chloris,
she, in deepest grief,
her hair flying loose, grim-faced,
unsteady on her feet, seems to have
two wills, two hearts within her;
and with the ray of clear thinking
dimmed by the great flame of love,
she first decks herself, then makes
a dire tangle of her disheveled hair,
and wanders in her mind, but ever fair
so agitatedly speaks to herself.

(Please, turn page quietly)

Aria

Un pensiero voli in ciel, se in cielo è quella alma bella che la pace m'involò. Se in avero è condannato per avermi disprezzato, io dal regno delle pene io mio bene rapirò.

Recitative

Ma fermata, pensier,
pur troppo è vero che fra l'ombre
d'averno è condannato
per giusto pena, e per crudel mio fato.
Sì, sì, rapida io scendo
a rapir al mio bene
dell'arso Dite
alle infocate arene.
Ma, che veggio?
Rimira il mio sembiante
dispettosa poi fugge un'ombra errante.
Tirsi, o Tirsi, ah, crudele!

Aria

Per te lasciai la luce, ed or che mi conduce Amor per rivederti, tu vuoi partir da me. Deh, ferma i passi incerti, o pur se vuoi fuggir, dimmi perchè?

Recitative

Non ti bastava, ingrate, d'avermi in vita lacerato il core? Dopo l'ultimo fato siegui ad esser per me furia d'amore; anzi, ti prendi a scherno, ch'io venga teco ad abitar l'inferno. Ma pietà per rigore ti renderò. Su vieni al dolce oblio di Lete: Let a thought soar into the sky, if in heaven is that fair soul which robbed me of my peace. But if he is condemned to Hell because he scorned me, I from the realm of punishment shall rescue my beloved.

But stop, thoughts — alas it is too true that he is condemned among the shades of deepest Hell as a just punishment for my cruel fate. Yes, yes, I'll rapidly descend to save my beloved from the god of burning Hell, from the red-hot sands.
But what do I see?
A wandering spirit sees my face again angrily and flees.
Thyrsis, o Thyrsis — ah, cruel one!

For you I left the daylight, and now that Love leads me here to see you, you want to leave me. Oh, stop your uncertain steps, or, if you want to go, tell me why.

Wasn't it enough for you, ingrate, to have lacerated my heart while you lived?
After your death, you still inflict a frenzy of love on me; rather, you treat with scorn the fact that I've come to live with you in Hell. But I'll return compassion for your

Come to the sweet forgetfulness of Lethe.

indi daranno pace gli Elisi, al già sofferto affanno.

Aria

Lascia omai le brune vele, negro pin di Flegetonte. Io faro che un zeffiretto, per diletto, spiri intorno a te fedele; e che mova i bianchi lini, pellegrini, in Acheronte.

Recitative

Ma siamo giunti in Lete. Odi il suono soave degli Elisi beati.

Entrée

Minuetto

In queste amene piaggie serene, da sè ridente nasce ogni fior. Tra suoni e cantanti, sempre clemente spiran gli amanti, aura d'amor.

Recitative

Sì, disse Clori, e se d'un sol estinto più non vide il bel lume, lo vide almen per fantasia dipinto. Then the Elysian fields will give respite to our past suffering.

Leave the dark brown sails now, black boat over Phlegethon. I will see that a light breeze, for your delight, breathes constantly around you; and that it moves the white canvas, along the river Acheron.

But we have reached the river Lethe. Hear the sweet sounds of the blessed in Elysium.

On these pleasant serene shores, laughing to itself, each flower is born. Amid music and song, always mild, lovers breathe an air of love.

Yes, said Chloris, and if an eclipsed sun's bright light was no longer seen, at least it was seen in the imagination. Inspired orchestra
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News of Note

from the Handel and Haydn Society



YOUTH CHORUS TO SING AT SYMPHONY HALL

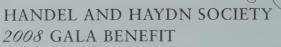
The Handel and Haydn Society Youth Chorus, an ensemble in the Society's Vocal Apprenticeship Program, has been invited to perform at Symphony Hall as part of the WCRB Cartoon Festival on Saturday, April 5, at 2.30pm. The Youth Chorus is one of only four ensembles invited to perform on the main stage as part of WCRB's 10th annual festival. Tickets are \$10 and available through www.bso.org. The event benefits the Brain Injury Association of Massachusetts.

IOHN FINNEY TO BE HONORED AT THIS YEAR'S GALA BENEFIT

The Society's Chorusmaster and Associate Conductor John Finney is honored at "The Society Ball," Handel and Haydn's 2008 Gala Benefit, Saturday, April 5, at 6.30pm at the Taj Boston. Mr. Finney has been the Society's Chorusmaster since 1990 and has conducted many of the Society's performances. The Gala Benefit offers an evening of fine dining, dancing, live and silent auctions, and special musical performances. Proceeds support the Society's educational and artistic programs. For tickets, call 617 262 1815.

HAYDN'S THE CREATION AT THE HATCH SHELL, MAY 2009

Next season, the Society will celebrate important anniversaries in the lives of some of music's most beloved composers. These celebrations will culminate in a free, outdoor performance of Haydn's monumental oratorio, *The Creation*, at Boston's Hatch Shell on Sunday, May 31, 2009. Grant Llewellyn conducts the Chorus and Period-Instrument Orchestra in part of a world-wide event honoring Haydn's 200th anniversary.



Society Ball
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Handel and Haydn's

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The program includes four choral ensembles. **Singers** is for students age 8-11 who may not have sung in a choir before. The **Youth Chorus** features more than 50 choristers, ages 10-14. The **Young Women's Chorus** is a musically challenging ensemble for high school girls. The **Young Men's Chorus**, for changing to changed male voices, grades 7+, was started last year with a generous grant from the Linde Family Foundation.

For more information, contact Director of Education Robin Baker at 617 262 1815, ext. 126, or rbaker@handelandhaydn.org



UPCOMING CONCERTS

APRIL 5 AT 2.30PM Symphony Hall, Boston Youth Chorus appears in WCRB's Cartoon Festival

APRIL 12 AT 7PM
Tufts University, Medford
Young Men's Chorus sings
at a Choral Festival at Tufts

APRIL 20 AT 3PM
NEC's Jordan Hall, Boston
Youth Chorus sings with the
Dedham Choral Soiciety

MAY 18 AT 7.30PM Cutler Majestic, Boston VAP Spring Concert



Please support the Handel and Haydn Society!

If you appreciate this performance, the Handel and Haydn Society's 193-year history in Boston, and the value of in-depth arts education for young children, please give to the 2007-08 Annual Fund. Ticket sales cover only 40% of the Society's expenses this season. Generous donors like you help make up the difference.

Your contribution to the Society's Annual Fund supports...

- Educational outreach programs that serve more than 10,000 children each year in the Greater Boston community;
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Donors also receive special benefits and events. For more information and to make your donation today, visit **www.handelandhaydn.org/contribute**, or call the Development Department at 617 262 1815 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm).

Thank you!

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SATURDAY, JANUARY 12, 2008, 8:00 PM

Blow, Thou Winter Wind!

Morton Lauridsen's *Mid-Winter Songs*, Earl Kim's *Some Thoughts on Keats and Coleridge*, and works of Edward Elgar, Randall Thompson, and others.

SATURDAY, MARCH 29, 2008, 8:00 PM

Vox Populi: Choral Works from Folk Music of the World

Ariel Ramirez's stunning *Missa Criolla* and other works from classical music's encounter with folk traditions. *Post-concert reception for all audience members*.

SATURDAY, JUNE 7, 2008, 8:00 PM

Summer Nights on the Water

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Coda

A conversation with Daniel Stepner, concertmaster



How did you begin playing the period violin?

A teacher of mine lent me a Baroque bow during my undergraduate years. He had also recorded some Bach in a manner I found intriguing: more like speaking, lyrical but not overcharged, saving and shaping intensity for the musical climaxes. So I was eager to experiment with restored violins and bows by the time I got to graduate school.

How has the violin evolved since the Baroque period?

Though the violin–compared to woodwind and brass instruments—has been of relatively stable construction since the 16th century, certain aspects varied constantly: string materials, internal supports, neck angle, and styles and weights of the bow. The violin evolved constantly until the midnineteenth century. Even in the early 20th century, most soloists and

orchestral string players played on gut strings (unwound sheep gut) as opposed to the metal strings now most commonly used. In Corelli's and Bach's day, there was an even wider variety of construction and styles (and probably of playing!) than there is today.

You are an accomplished player in both large orchestras and small ensembles. How are the demands different on a performer in a smaller ensemble like tonight's?

In chamber music, with one player on one line of the music, each is a soloist as well as an ensemble player, so there is a wonderful balance between the individual and the communal.

Orchestral playing at its best (even in smaller orchestras like tonight's) requires a willingness to blend with one's section, even when playing a virtuoso passage. This is as true for the concertmaster as for someone in the middle of the ensemble.



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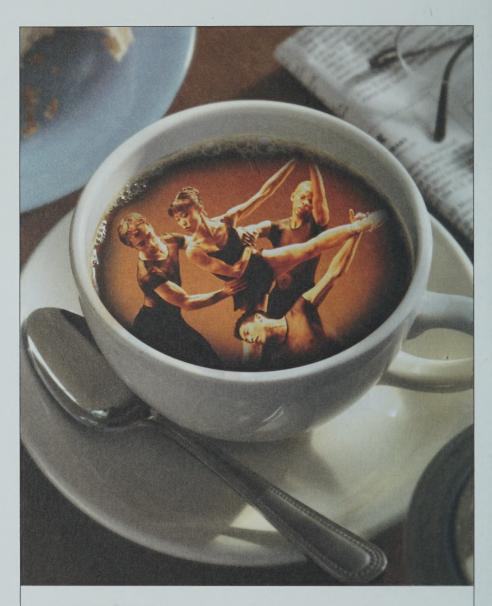






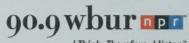








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